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ABSTRACT

This report on the organization, development, and dissemination of educational and commercial radio and television programs by the Swedish Educational Broadcasting Company includes some of the research being done at the Open University. A planned reorganization of Sveriges Radio into two separate television channels and several channels for local radio is described, as well as programming of adult educational programs on radio, several newer television programs for the schools, and research by the Audience Research Department of Sveriges Radio and the Education Department. Distance teaching in higher education is available in three forms: university study circles, organized by the independent educational associations in collaboration with a university or college department; decentralized university courses which enable students to enroll on either a part-time or full-time basis in another town outside the university; and distance educational studies consisting of correspondence courses with additional study guides and booklists. (JEG)

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No. 94

SOME ASPECTS OF EDUCATIONAL BROADCASTING IN SWEDEN

A report of a one-week study visit, in April, 1978.

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INTRODUCTION

At the invitation of Utbildningsradion (The Swedish Educational Broadcasting Company), I spent one week in Sweden between 16th and 21st April, 1978, on the one hand to learn about developments in educational broadcasting and research into both educational broadcasting and general broadcasting in Sweden, and on the other to report some of the research carried out by our own group at the Open University.

One definition of a UNESCO consultant is a man who flies over a country and writes a report. In one week, it is not possible to obtain a thorough insight into Swedish developments in this field, but it was clear to me that much of the Swedish experience is of direct relevance to the work of our own group and a number of more general areas of the University's work. For this reason, I thought it would be useful to record some of the information and impressions I obtained. Also, I brought back a large amount of information, mostly in English, the availability of which may be of interest to others.

UTBILDNINGSRADION

The Reorganisation

Educational broadcasting has a long history in Sweden. The first Swedish educational radio programme was broadcast in 1926, and the school television service began in 1961. Consequently, there has been an Educational Broadcasting Department in the general broadcasting organisation, Sveriges Radio, for many years. Sveriges Radio is an unusual organisation. It is a limited liability company, whose stockholders include Trades Unions and employers organisations, but

whose revenues are raised by licence fees determined by the national government. There are government regulations which determine in broad terms Sveriges Radio's manner of operation, but otherwise it is very much independent.

In 1967, however, the government set up a committee to study the role of television and radio in education (TRU). This was not merely an armchair committee, since it was given production facilities and staffing to enable it to produce experimental programmes and courses for different educational sectors. In recent years, TRU's activities have been primarily geared to the production of educational programmes for the pre-school and adult education sectors (except for language teaching, in which Sveriges Radio has a long tradition).

In December, 1976, the Swedish Parliament approved the setting up, after a number of reports, commissions, and studies, of a new organisation, called Utbildningsradion (The Educational Broadcasting Company), into which both Sveriges Radio's Educational Broadcasting Department and TRU have been incorporated, from January 1st, 1978. Utbildningsradion (UR) is now a subsidiary company of Sveriges Radio, but funded entirely from the State budget, and not from licence fees. UR pays Sveriges Radio for the broadcasting services it receives. All staff from both original organisations were guaranteed employment in the new organisation, which now has 330 staff. At the moment, overheads, in the form of salaries, etc., constitute a high proportion of UR's costs (approximately 80%).

UR now has the responsibility for producing and broadcasting programmes for the entire education sector, i.e. pre-school, schools, adult education, and higher education. The company has a free and independent status vis-a-vis public authorities, organisations and pressure groups. This means, in UR's own words, "that the company's

integrity is strictly protected, and that UR can co-function with educational society at large from its own absolutely independent premises and judgements... UR's activities have a clear pedagogic aim, but the means, the working methods, applied are journalistic, just as with the production of general programmes."[1] Certain guidelines however have been drawn up by the government. These particularly emphasise that UR should give priority to productions for disadvantaged groups, such as those with only a short-time schooling behind them, and the physically and mentally handicapped. The importance of productions for immigrants, and of increased regional activities, is similarly emphasised.

UR is just the first part of a planned general reorganisation of Sveriges Radio. It has now set up a number of "daughter" companies. These are for television (with two separate channels, relatively independent of each other), for national radio (with several channels), for local radio, and for educational broadcasting (UR). These daughter companies are under a general umbrella of the "mother" company, Sveriges Radio, but each are more or less autonomous, as regards programming policy.

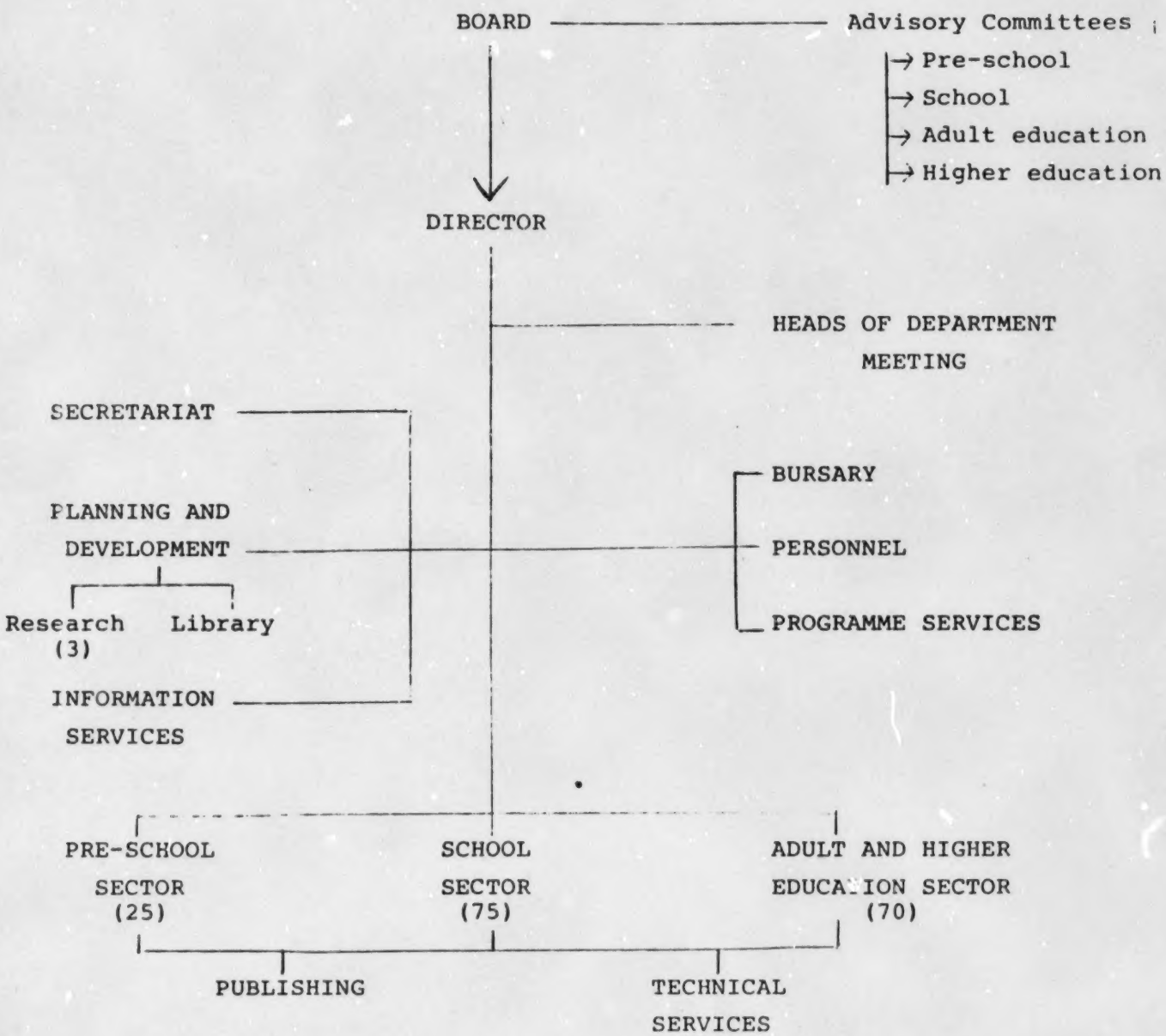
Internal Organisation.

Figure 1 sets out the organisation of UR. The advisory committees are appointed by invitation from UR, and include representatives of the National Board of Education, and other interested sectors, including the Ministry of Education. However, the key decision-

1. The Swedish Educational Broadcasting Company. Stockholm: Utbildningsradion, English information sheet, 1978.

FIGURE I

ORGANISATION CHART FOR UTBILDNINGSRADION



Nos.in brackets refer to rough estimates working in each section.

Total number of employees: 330

making body, as far as programming is concerned, is the Heads of Department meeting. Programme ideas from the advisory committees, Planning and Development group, and, most importantly, from the producers themselves in the different sectors, are discussed and filtered here. Decisions on the annual output are taken by the Director in management meetings. Decisions on broad programme policy, finance. etc., rest with the Board, which has five members appointed by the government, two by Sveriges Radio, and two elected by the staff of UR.

Although there are three main programme sectors, in practice there are several "subject-area" groups either within sectors, or that cut across sectors. For instance, the schools sector is divided into three levels, primary (Lågstadiegruppen), middle (mellan-stadiegruppen), and upper (högstadiet och gymnasieskolan), equivalent to the organisation of school education in Sweden. In addition, there are the following subject groups: foreign languages; Swedish; music; current affairs; immigrants; and social studies (So/No).

The Planning and Development group is concerned with more long-range developments, and keeping an eye on the overall balance between the programming in different sectors. It also includes the research group and the library. An overseas consultancy service is being considered.

UR has its own publishing section, with its own editing staff, so teachers' manuals and accompanying print materials for learners are completely integrated with the production of programmes and under the control of UR.

UR has a very generous copyright policy. The copyrights tomost programmes from UR have been purchased outright, and the programmes can thus be taped and copied without limitation. Programmes are therefore

taped off-air when they are broadcast, so that they can be kept available for pre-schools, schools and study associations in the form of sound tapes, sound cassettes, or video cassettes. Some programmes are also available on film. This service is provided mainly by audio-visual centres run by counties and municipalities in the various parts of Sweden.

Programming

UR is currently producing about 100 television and 100 radio programmes a year. Producers are specialised either in television or in radio. A television producer will be responsible at the moment for about three or four programmes a year. As a result of the reorganisation, there seems to be a surplus of producers, given the lack of additional resources for programme production.

For this reason, and because of the copying facilities available, the provision of adequate transmission time did not seem to be a major problem. However, UR is awaiting the reorganisation of Sveriges Radio with some anxiety, to be sure of access to programme production and transmission facilities.

In the time available, I was not able to obtain a comprehensive idea of the range of programming available, although a glance at the list of research projects will give some idea (see pages 12-15). However, there were two series which I found of particular interest:

Start is an English language course for adults which has probably been the most successful educational broadcasting project in Scandinavia, if not Europe. Since its inception in 1971, 2.25 million copies of the accompanying books have been sold in Sweden alone (which has a total population of about 8.2 million).

The entire course material comprises:

- 6 course books (one per term, each term of 13 weeks).
- Radio programmes (two per week, each broadcast three times each week.)
- TV broadcasts (several per week in year 1, fewer in year 2, none in subsequent years, each broadcast three times a week.)
- audio tape and record versions of the course book
- questions to be answered and corrected by post, through a correspondence school.
- revision books
- picture cards and film-strips for group work
- manuals for study circle leaders

The course was so designed that students could manage with just the course book, which contained all the subject matter, plus one of the two radio programmes a week, for the oral aspect. However, it was assumed (correctly) that most students would study through a combination of broadcasts and study circles (which are very widespread and popular in Sweden). Consequently, the study associations were warned well in advance of the transmission of the series, and study circles were established throughout the country in association with the course.

The course was aimed at those with little or no previous knowledge of English, and with no study experience of languages. The course deliberately planned for a slow rate of progress. Speaking and understanding English were considered more important than reading or writing it. This strategy was decided upon as a result of an interest survey carried out by the Audience Research Department of Sveriges Radio.

The material was produced by a project team, headed by a producer from the adult section of the Educational Broadcasting Department of Sveriges Radio. It included

authors of the print, radio and television material, a television producer, an editor from Sveriges Radio's publishing department, an artist, an editor from a correspondence school, who was responsible for the group working methodology and production of materials for group sessions, and an information officer.

The print, radio and television material, and the group material, were extensively pre-tested in the Stockholm area in 1970, and the material was extensively amended as a result. All the radio programmes were transmitted en bloc six weeks before the courses began, to allow the local audio-visual centres to record the programmes off-air. Courses were organised for group leaders, and residential week-end courses were set up for those who wished to enrol for them.

Enrolments in study circles alone in Sweden were as follows:

1971/72	108,000
1972/73	176,000
1973/74	203,000

Drop-out before the end of the course was 7% in the first year, and about 567,000 listened to one or other of the radio programmes each week, on average, over the first year. Of those who enrolled in the first course in 1971, 40% have gone on to enrol for the sixth course.

The material was so designed that it could be used in other languages beside Swedish, with minor adaptations. For instance, the television programmes were segmented, so that the English-speaking parts were kept separate from any Swedish language introduction. The course has been successfully used in Norway and Finland, and, not quite so successfully, in Denmark. In Norway (population: 4 million) there have been 155,000 course enrolments for Start, and the courses are still continuing.

Mediernas Värld (The World of Media) is a series of six programmes aimed primarily at 8 - 10 year-old children, which aim to increase children's awareness of how various media - radio, records, films, TV, advertising, comics - attempt to influence or act upon children. The approach is to devote each programme to a specific emotion, as can be seen from the titles of the programmes:

1. Laughs and Giggles (Skratt och Fniss)
2. Thrills and Frights (Spänning och Skräck)
3. Nice and Attractive (Trevlig och Trovärdig)
4. Strong and Handsome (Stark och Vacker)
5. Glitter and Glamour (Glitter och Glans)
6. Love and Happiness (Kärlek och Lycka)

Given the intended age of the audience, the programmes take a very direct and mature approach to the analysis of media effects. The programmes are also, in my view, rather controversial. They approach media effects from a fresh point of view, not concentrating on specific media or sociological theory, at least in the programmes themselves. Some of the material I found rather disturbing, given the age-group for which they are intended, but not in an unjustifiable way. The programmes have been evidently very popular with both parents and children (being transmitted both during the day and in the early evening) and the series will be repeated this year. I have ordered VCR copies of each of the programmes, as I think they are very revealing about media effects, and not only on young children.

TRU

TRU was set up by the Ministry of Education in 1967 to be an experimental institution with pedagogical and technical resources for the production of television and radio programmes and supplementary materials for all educational levels: school, university, adult, and (later) pre-school and the handicapped. According to the

Ministry of Education at the time, the media should be given a central function in the learning process in school education, and an increased use of broadcast television and radio was recommended. As a result, TRU was associated with or carried out a number of pilots and experiments. Two examples are:

1. A new poly-technical university was created (Linköping), constructed for a high degree of closed circuit television lectures, to be produced by TRU. The number of lecturers to be employed at a more senior level was to be less than in a conventional university. However, the compulsory use of video-lectures did not work out well in practice, primarily due to strong resistance from the academic staff, but partly also from the students.

2. During the first three to four years, TRU produced a number of courses based on the school syllabus (which is centralised in Sweden), but adapted for adults. They were multi-media courses, designed according to a system approach. Many people watched the television programmes, fewer listened to the radio, fewer still bought the accompanying books, and very few went on to take the end-of-course examination. The courses also failed to attract many people with a short, basic education, who were the primary target group. Investigations of interests and needs confirmed that few people were interested in credits or competence courses.

TRU eventually concluded that the design of radio and television courses for adults did not fit in with the concept of study circles. Strictly syllabus-structured multi-media courses did not work in this setting. They were therefore gradually replaced by learner-centred group-work, with optional use of media in courses constructed to a modular form. Television

was no longer used for direct teaching, but for publicity, motivation, or orientation. Radio was used primarily for individuals who would not or could not join a local study group. Audio tapes specially produced for group work worked well. Video tapes and film copies of broadcasts have been made more and more available for viewing in groups, but so far, video machines are scarce among the study organisations.

Production for basic adult education therefore has been the predominant part of TRU's work before the merger with Sveriges Radio. The pre-school programmes proved successful, and have expanded, as has production for and about the handicapped.

I saw video cassettes of two TRU TV programmes. One was designed to encourage people to join study circles. This programme centred on an elderly lady from a remote area in the North of Sweden who had recently joined a study centre for the first time. She was following a joint TRU/Brevskolan (correspondence school) course on the use of every-day Swedish, dealing with problems such as how to make a complaint and how to fill in forms.

The second programme I saw was related to a course "The Changing Countryside" (Bygd i förvandling). This is a course run in conjunction with study circles. The course attempts to encourage members of the study circles to trace the recent histories of their own communities from round about the turn of the century. Print materials provide guidance, source materials, and examples from other study circles. The course is a good example of learner-centred group work, in a modular form. The programme I saw showed how one study circle had gone about the task, ending with a professional exhibition of their work.

I have ordered VCR cassettes of both programmes, which have English sub-titles added.

RESEARCH AT UTBILDNINGSRADION

Both the Education Department of Sveriges Radio and TRU had their own research staff before the reorganisation. The reorganisation though has led to a reduction in full-time research staff. There are now only three: Claus Rudén, who leads the group; Jan Löjdquist, who has been responsible for programmes for immigrants as well; and Nitan Lilya, who is the only surviving researcher from TRU. One other person is on extended leave of absence. Christer Frey, who was in charge of research, is now Head of Personnel.

Because of the need to guarantee existing jobs as a result of the reorganisation, which has led to a surplus overall of staff, there are no resources for recruiting additional staff to UR, even for an area which is acknowledged to be understaffed, as the research group clearly is. Consequently, the research staff are working under great pressure. In February, the group received 37 requests for evaluation studies from production groups. Listed below are the 13 areas to which the research group gave priority. Of these, nine will be carried out.

Adult Education.

Tender Food. A pre-testing of the programme in March. Sveriges Radio's Audience Research Department helped to select 100 people in the Stockholm area, to be invited to a pre-view of the programme. About 40 were expected to come. A short questionnaire was given after the preview, followed by a discussion in small groups with someone from UR and PUB sitting in as interviewer/observer.

Not Just Words. Programmes will be tested on various groups, for example a professional group, a higher-education level group, an immigrant group. Follow-up to an earlier study.

Family Scenes. 10 additional questions on two programmes - also a follow-up.

Pre-School Sector.

OM-programmes (OM = Onsdagsmorgon = Wednesday morning). Enquiry into the utilisation of the OM-programmes, viewing figures, transmission times, information/publicity about the programme, teachers' handbook.

Telephone interviews with about 60 schools, including about 30 that have bought the teachers' manual.

School Sector.

Evaluation of AVIN (the journal of UR sent to schools). A questionnaire to 750 teachers on programme utilisation, as well as questions about their views on UR/Schools information. Data was collected in Nov/Dec. 1977, analysis being carried out, report likely in middle of March.

Enquiry into programmes for immigrants. Radio programmes for immigrant pupils in schools will be produced in their own language for another year. There will be about 100 programmes in five languages. The aim of the enquiry will be to find out how information is obtained about the programmes, how programmes are used, and how they work as instruction. As well as school visits and interviews with immigrant language teachers and pupils, a questionnaire will be sent to the A/V centres on the borrowing of programmes during 1978.

Enquiry into TV-series ZOOM and radio-series NU. ZOOM is a new TV series which goes out for the first time in 1978, with 15 programmes aimed at social studies teachers at the upper school level. There is a student magazine which has three editions during the Spring. NU is a radio series which takes up current events for social studies courses at the upper level. There are three programmes each month. The aim of the research

is to see how information about the programmes is obtained, how programmes are used, and how the programmes work as instruction. A questionnaire will be sent to schools which have bought the magazine ZOOM, in addition to questionnaires sent to social studies teachers who are included in the AVIN study.

Our Future. Five TV programmes transmitted during the Spring. The programmes aim to give students a broad perspective and a questioning of their environment. It is thought that high-school pupils will be stimulated to study their own environment, to enquire into their own surroundings, as a result of ideas contained in the programmes.

Evaluation of the series Booknews and It's Useful to Read. Through the A/V centres list of subscribers, Birgitta Erweth has made contact with a number of schools throughout the country that are following these two series on the radio. A teacher in each school will evaluate each programme that he listens to (with payment).

Evaluation of "News". "News" is in its seventh year of transmission and there is a good deal of knowledge about its use, on the whole. However, what is not known is the level of understanding of the programmes, or which programmes are too difficult with regard to structure, language, subject-matter, and content. By means of a questionnaire, schools using the programmes within convenient driving distance of Stockholm can be identified. In this way, contact can be made with teachers who would be willing to give opinions on the programmes. Three to four people from the "News" production group can go out and interview teachers (and pupils).

Evaluation of "From Me to You", English for Grade 3. A new stimulus series of radio programmes and pupils' workbooks. 10 programmes. Through orders for the work-books, contact can be made with schools willing to comment.

Evaluation of "Voyages of Discovery". This was a mutual request from the Primary level and Music groups. The material comprises six radio programmes and accompanying materials. Areas covered: Swedish, music, woodwork, geography, creative writing. The material has been in existence for three years and will be repeated in 1978/79.

Evaluation of "Harmony". A series also associated with the adult series "Play the Guitar." The series provides stimulus, working examples, and material for singing and playing in classes. Six radio programmes, six TV programmes, pupils' handbooks. The material is also intended to assist with the rapid development in music in the middle grades. The Music group wishes to know how the programmes are received, which materials work together with the TV and radio programmes, and to what extent co-operation is achieved with local music schools. Four school visits.

The research group expects that for certain of the projects, the production groups will provide help sending out and processing questionnaires and with school visits.

I was given an example of a questionnaire sent to teachers, for the study on the series "News". It included the following questions:

Have you made use of any "News" programmes (and if not, why not) with your class?

Which programmes did you use (the titles of the 14 programmes and a 2-3 line description of each was given)? Were they good or bad? Space was left for a one or two line comment on each programme.

Were programmes listened to on transmission or on a recording; if on the recording, how it was obtained?

How was the A/V centres' copying and distributing

system working?

How long was it between the transmission of a programme and its use in class, if on tape?

Had you used the telephone information service about forthcoming programmes?

Even if you did not use "News" in the class, did you listen to it for your own purposes?

Did any of the programmes lead to spontaneous discussion and follow-up? Examples?

Most of the questions were precoded, but with the opportunity for a few open-ended comments. In addition, there was a semantic differential scale, using the following dimensions:

difficult/easy; "meaty"/light; interesting/uninteresting; informative/uninformative; restful/tiring; critical/uncritical; good/bad; factual/discursive; relevant/irrelevant; political/apolitical; profound/superficial; fast/slow; reliable/unreliable.

This was to be used to describe the series as a whole.

In addition to the above research, there were several other publications which should be mentioned. Two were by Margareta Inglestam, on media. The first, "Whither Video? Commercial Commodity or Public Property", includes sections on videograms in the teaching process, methods of distribution and location of production in Sweden, roles for video, impact on children, and public policy issues. The second is a correspondence/study circle course: "The Word is Free?", which covers the press and other media, and is much concerned with the control and "democratisation" of media in Sweden.

I was also very interested in a publication brought out by the Education Department of Sveriges Radio in 1968, "Program Praktikan". This is a handbook designed to facilitate the use of radio and TV programmes in teaching.

Considered within the Department to have been ahead of its time, it is one of the most thorough handbooks for teachers that I have seen. It covers in detail principles of learning from media, the pedagogy behind the design of programme packages, the effectiveness of different media, and practical hints for teachers. A less ambitious publication five years later, called "Radio and TV in the Schools", discusses the role of the teacher, possible roles for TV and radio, and the result of research into utilisation of programmes. Both books contain details from programmes then current.

AUDIENCE RESEARCH DEPARTMENT, SVERIGES RADIO (PUB)

PUB has a budget of approximately £600,000 a year, with 50 employees, 20 of whom are in research positions, and a further 11 are in the field organisation. There are currently three research groups, focussing on studies of children, information transfer, and audiences, respectively. Studies on information transfer have taken on increasing significance and priority recently, and the introduction of local radio has also created a new focus for research.

Information Studies.

The focus of the information studies group is on the informative effects of radio and television. The prime goal is to investigate the preconditions for transmitting public information via radio and TV and to identify the relative roles of these media as sources of knowledge. This subject is approached from two starting points: the varying capacity and characteristics of different sub-groups within the audience; and programme format and content on the other.

The significance of this research is that the findings suggest that TV and radio tend to widen the knowledge gap between the well-educated and the less

well-educated (with certain important qualifications), but that there are certain production policies which can be taken to at least reduce this effect.

To tackle the area of varying capacities and characteristics, three studies were carried out, using similar methodology, for comparability, but varying in their choice of topic to represent areas of differing psychological space from the individual. These topics are:

a. Swedish energy supplies and the oil-crisis
b. Problems of developing countries.
c. Issues related to the labour market and industry.

Figure 2 gives an example of the research design for the third study.

In addition to these three studies, the information studies group has also carried out the following projects in the last couple of years:

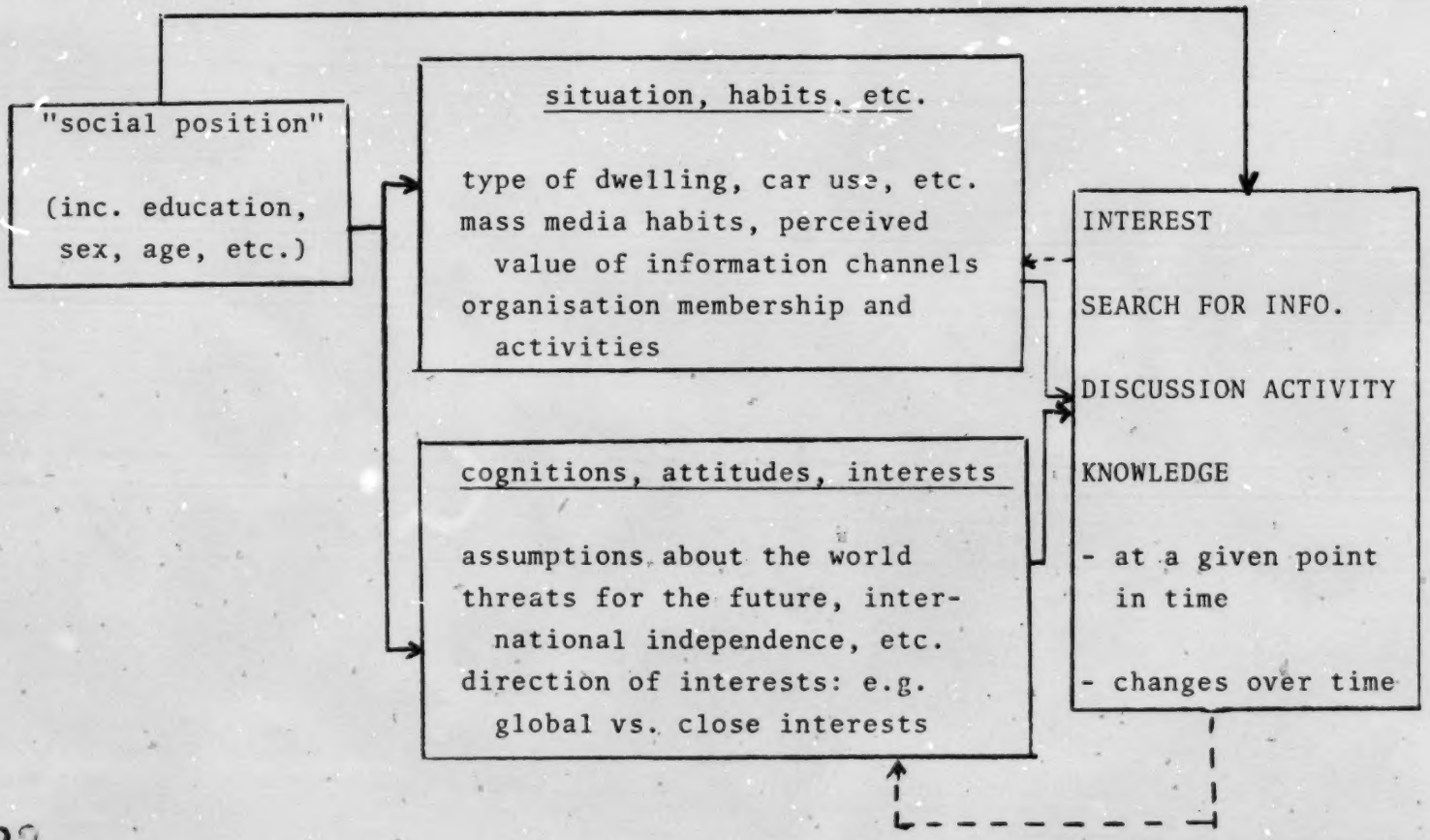
a. Social situation and communicative behaviour
b. Immigrants and the mass media
c. Information transfer to the public in the event of crisis or war.

Perhaps the most relevant study for our own research is that which concentrates on presentational aspects, "Man as Receiver of Information". This study examines the extent to which news programmes are understood by the general public, and the factors which help or hinder in this process. These studies have examined the verbal formulation of a news item and the illustrations used. Nearly 1000 adults have participated in the experiments. This study, which has been written up, is being followed up by a content analysis of daily TV news broadcasts, based on knowledge of the previous studies, the aim being

FIGURE 2

An example of an information-gaps study: The oil-crisis study.

Schematic illustration of variables


"social position"
(inc. education, sex, age, etc.)
situation, habits, etc.
type of dwelling, car use, etc.
mass media habits, perceived value of information channels
organisation membership and activities
cognitions, attitudes, interests
assumptions about the world
threats for the future, international independence, etc.
direction of interests: e.g. global vs. close interests
INTEREST
SEARCH FOR INFO.
DISCUSSION ACTIVITY
KNOWLEDGE
- at a given point in time
- changes over time

to describe what information is actually being transferred to the public through TV news programmes.

The findings of this research group are extremely important. For instance, the news is perceived by most viewers as a set of fragments or loose details, with more abstract and complex explanations of causes and consequences being lost by all except well-educated, middle-aged people, or those who for some reason have a special interest in or knowledge of the topic. Some items are recalled much more accurately than others, depending on the psychological distance of the topic from the mass of viewers. There are large individual differences between people on the recall of the same item. For me, the most significant finding was that the manner in which the news is presented is often decisive. It is important to present a news event in a way that emphasises causes and consequences. These items must be given a prominent place in a news item. The public needs this context and framework to give a news event meaning. This factor was more important than the language used or the nature of the visual presentation.

Children's studies and Audience studies

There are also several interesting studies carried out in these areas, which are described in detail in the summary of projects for 1976/77. (see appendix).

DISTANCE TEACHING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Off-campus higher education courses, enabling students to follow courses run by Universities, etc., in their local area, sometimes on a part-time basis, are being experimented with in Sweden. The responsibility for this has been devolved to the six regional boards responsible for the organisation of post-secondary school education in Sweden. (There is a unitary system of higher education

in Sweden, but with increasing emphasis on decentralisation and local initiatives.) I visited Mr. Ulf Fornstedt, responsible for the administration of distance education studies for the higher education region of Uppsala, and Professor Urban Dahllöf, of the Department of Education, Uppsala University.

There are several kinds of external studies available at a University level in Sweden. Dahllöf[1] gives a useful description of the various kinds, which I have drawn from and summarised below:

1. University study circles, organised by the independent educational associations in collaboration with a university or college department. Such circles can be set up at any place in Sweden, as soon as there is a sufficient number of interested participants, provided that a competent course leader and qualified teachers can be acquired. An inspector is generally appointed by the university from among the senior academic staff, and most often the staff of the department are responsible for the teaching, even though this cannot be included the ordinary teaching load. Students have to have the minimum qualifications for entry to the University department before they can be examined by the university, and must also pay a substantial fee. There were approximately 1700 university study circles in 1973, covering 813 courses and 12000 participants.

2. Decentralised university courses enable students to enrol on either a part-time or full-time basis in another town outside the university. Formally, the local school-board has been responsible for the arrangements, including the hiring of teachers, but this has been done in close co-operation with an inspector nominated by the university from amongst its senior academic staff. The relevant university department is in general responsible for teaching

[1] Dahllöf, U. Reforming Higher Education and External Studies in Sweden and Australia. Uppsala: Uppsala Univ., 1977.

and examinations. Courses can be for either a full academic programme, providing at least two of the three year programme in the students' own town, or for just a single course locally. These courses are free of charge. About 40 courses are offered in this way each year, attracting between 850 and 1500 students.

3. Distance education studies are more recent, and have been run on an experimental basis since 1973. They consist basically of a correspondence course, with additional study guides to the booklist. The courses correspond to one semester's study, but spread over two semesters. Usually, there are at least three residential schools on each course, where examinations are also taken. A special telephone service is operated so that the students of a certain course have an opportunity to call their teacher at certain times of the week. He then calls them back at the university's expense. Students either have to have the minimum university entrance requirement, or must be at least 25 years old, with five years' work experience. The courses are free of charge. In the academic year 1974/5, there were 1548 enrolments. Television transmissions have not been used, nor have radio broadcasts, except for one series of support programmes, which was reported to be "not very successful". Audio tapes of lectures are sometimes available, however.

The evaluation of the distance teaching experiment is still being carried out, and there have also been evaluations of the university study circles and decentralised courses. It is interesting to note that for the latter kind of courses, 80% of participants live in the town, and a further 10% within 50 kilometers of the town, where courses are being given (even though these courses are based predominantly in low population density areas). It seems that most students from beyond a 50 kilometer distance are full-time students. Only 18% of the

university study circles offered really got started, and there was a great concentration of all kinds of external courses in the big county centres - only 4 out of 47 being located outside big industrial and commercial centres, as far as study circles are concerned. Dahllöf concludes that:

"It is quite evident that, when the same course is offered both as a distance course from Umeå and as a non-distance external course in the vicinity, people prefer the local course when the physical distance is no longer than 50 km but that local external courses have difficulties in enrolling participants living further away than 50 km... there are, at least for the northern, sparsely populated region of Sweden, strong indications that distance and local external courses do indeed supplement each other and that distance-education programmes have a unique potential for enrolling people living in small communities and in the countryside far from a regional centre. The distance of 50 km as a critical commuting limit with regard to work has long been recognised by Swedish geographers."[1]

Even however in metropolitan areas such as Göteborg and Lund/Malmö there are apparently difficulties in attending internal, part-time courses regularly, while there are on the other hand "no indications of any systematic, inhibitory effects of long distances on participation in the distance-education programmes." Willén, who carried out the main evaluation studies on the Swedish distance education experiments,[2] also stresses the importance of advertising and information for

1. Dahllöf, op.cit., pp. 120-121.

2. Willén, B. Experimental activities with distance education at Swedish universities and some preliminary results from the evaluation programme. Umeå: Department of Educational Development, University of Umeå, 1975.

the enrolment. She distinguishes between national and local information and general and specific information.

With regard to distance education, Willén found that 90% were generally satisfied. In addition, she asked students to rate the importance of different components of their distance-education programmes. This study is not yet published, but Dahllöf quotes the following figures:

	% rating the component as very important or important
More residential schools	31
Study circles	36
Letter contacts	48
Telephone contacts	46
Study guidance	43
Taped lectures	51
Radio broadcasts	30
Television broadcasts	29

Dahllöf comments on the relatively high figures for components referring to feedback in terms of letter and telephone contacts as well as study guidance, while, at a lower level, about 30% is found for radio and television broadcasting and residential schools, and he goes on to comment that the findings in the table cannot be said to give any strong support to the need to provide broadcast programmes, and that, in full accordance with the Australian experience, there is a great need to strengthen the feedback process rather than to embark upon expensive means of presentation over the air. He also in his book refers to one or two Australian commentators, who were sharply critical about the relevance and use of TV at the Open University.

Without wishing to in any way suggest that an Open University solution to distance education problems is the right solution for Sweden - it is clearly not - there are nevertheless grounds for treating Dahllöf's conclusions about the role of broadcast media with some caution. For

a start, there is a difference between commenting on components which are a part of one's course, and components which have not been experienced as part of a course, as broadcasts have not been used yet in Sweden for higher education distance courses. In any case the differences are not large. Perhaps more importantly, the importance of feedback for those who answered in this way may well be due to the way the distance education courses have been designed. I was unable to ascertain during my short stay the nature of the correspondence teaching, but I was under the impression that it was mainly in the form of notes by teachers, accompanied by set reading, and contact with tutors by letter and telephone. The correspondence material was not, as far as I can tell, designed as the main study source, nor have the professional correspondence schools, which in Sweden have a generally good reputation for the design of correspondence materials at other than university level, been involved. Therefore, students do probably need more feedback and contact than in the Open University, where the correspondence texts carry a large part of the "teaching". Certainly, Willén's figures show a greater need for feedback than our own studies at the Open University of a similar nature.[1] Also, while broadcasting is of course expensive, so too is the provision of feedback and personal study guidance on a large scale for distance education students. No costs were given for the Swedish experience.

Pass-rates though for the Swedish students were good. At around 60% per distance education course, they compare favourably with other Swedish external study courses, although for comparable subject areas, they are slightly lower than Open University pass-rates.

1. Bates, A.W. Student Use of Open University Broadcasting. Milton Keynes: Open University, 1975.
Gallagher, M. Broadcasting and the Open University Student. Milton Keynes: Open University, 1978.

Having read in Dahllöf's book a particularly ill-informed account of the Open University by an Australian visitor, I am all the more aware of the dangers of making snap judgements as a result of a brief visit. It did seem to me though that:

1. Distance education at a higher education level has been tried on only a very small scale, and the potential has nowhere near been tapped yet. In particular, there seems to be considerable scope for more home-based higher education courses.

2. Broadcasting has not been used to any extent, nor could it be justified economically, given the present scale of distance education.

3. No consideration has apparently been given to the potential of non-broadcast media for distance-education courses, other than for the use of cassettes to record and distribute lectures.

4. The design and control of courses is almost entirely in the hands of academic university departments. No attempts have apparently been made to draw on the experience of other organisations with a background in distance education, such as correspondence schools and TRU or Sveriges Radio. There seemed to be almost no contact or co-ordination between universities and these organisations.

5. Nevertheless, where distance education has been tried at a higher education level in Sweden, it has proved to be at least as successful as conventional methods.

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I would like to thank all those who gave up their time to talk to me, and provided me with excellent

hospitality and copious information. This report in fact combines information from both discussions and papers given to me, some of which I have tried to translate from the Swedish. It is therefore entirely my fault if I have made factual errors or gained false impressions, and any comments or corrections will be gladly received and incorporated.

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Professor Urban Dahllöf, Uppsala University.

Appendix

List of papers obtained

(Unless marked otherwise* papers are in English)

AMLING, L.E. Approaches to distance studies in West Germany and Sweden, in 10 Jahre DIFF. Tubingen: Deutsches Institüt for Fernstudien, 1978.

UTBILDNINGSRADION. The Swedish Educational Broadcasting Company. Stockholm: Utbildningsradion, 1978.

UTBILDNINGSRADION. UR - Utbildningsradion*. Stockholm: Utbildningsradion, 1977.

SVERIGES RADIO. Program Praktikan: Radio and TV in Schools. Stockholm: Sveriges Radio Education Department, 1968.

SVERIGES RADIO. Radio and Television in the Schools. Stockholm: Sveriges Radio Education Department, 1973.

VAN DYKE, K. The World of Media* AVIN, April-May, 1977.

SVERIGES RADIO. The World of Media: Teachers Book* Stockholm: Sveriges Radio Education Department, 1977.

HORNEIJ, R. The Development of "Start": an English Course for Adults. Stockholm: Sveriges Radio Education Department, 1975.

CARROLL, J.K. Teaching English as a foreign language: Sweden's venture into multi-media instruction, Educational Broadcasting, May/June 1976.

INGELSTAM, M. Whither Video: Commercial Commodity or Public Property. Stocksund: TRU, 1977.

STIERNLÖF, S. and INGELSTAM, M. The Word is Free?* Malmö: Författarna och Arbetet, 1977.

TRU. A programme for sound and pictures in education. Stockholm: TRU, 1975

TRU. Distance education: an outline of the present situation and some organisational alternatives for post-secondary education. Stockholm: TRU, 1975

TRU. Distance education systems in a number of countries. Stockholm: TRU, 1975.

TRU. Kabelvision Kiruna. Stockholm: TRU, 1975.

TRU. The Changing Countryside* Stocksund: TRU, 1974

TRU/BREVSKOLAN. Ut med språket!* Stockholm: Brevskolan, 1973.

SVERIGES RADIO. Audience and programme research: Presentation of projects 1976/77. Stockholm: Sveriges Radio, Audience and Programme Research Department, 1977.

SVERIGES RADIO. Audience and Programme Research Newsletters: Stockholm: Sveriges Radio Audience Research Department:
1976.No.1. How does TV influence children?
2. Improved information via local radio?
3. Radio/TV in the lives of pre-schoolers.
4. Fragments of reality.
1977.No.1. How important is presentation?
2. Studies of local radio.
3. How can immigrants be understood?
4. TV Viewing 1976/77 - a spotty record
5. Information gaps and labour market.

FINDAHL, O. and HÖIJER, B. Perceiving reality via mass media: people and the news. Stockholm: Sveriges Radio Audience Research Department, 1977

FINDAHL et al. Man as receiver of information. Stockholm: Sveriges Radio Audience Research Department, 1969.

FINDAHL, O. The effect of visual illustration upon perception and retention of news programmes. Sveriges Radio Audience Research Department, 1971.

FINDAHL, O. and HÖIJER, B. Repetitions and reformulations in a news programme: a study in retention and audience perception. Stockholm: Sveriges Radio Audience Research Department, 1972.

FINDAHL, O. and HÖIJER, B. An analysis of errors in the recollection of a news programme. SR/PUB, 1973.

FINDAHL, O. and HÖIJER, B. On knowledge, social privilege, and the news. SR/PUB, 1975.

FINDAHL, O. and HÖIJER, B. Fragments of reality. SR/PUB, 1976

FINDAHL, O. and HÖIJER, B. How important is presentation? SR/PUB, 1977.

NOWAK, L. Information gaps in the developing country field: Summary. SR/PUB, 1977.

HÖIJER, B. et al. Informationsklyftorna - en utmaning för etermedia*. SR/PUB, 1976.

WIGREN, G. Könsroller och informationsklyftor (Women's role and information knowledge*). SR/PUB, 1977.

KJELLMOR, S. Informationsklyftor, arbetsliv och samhällsdeltagande. (Information knowledge, work life, and community participation*). SR/PUB, 1977.

ABRAHAMSON, U.B. Individuals meet information: an in-depth study of two TV programmes about immigrants. SR/PUB, 1977.

LÖWANDER, B. Immigrants and the mass media in Sweden. SR/PUB, 1977.

RYDIN, I. Information processes in pre-school children I: how relevant and irrelevant verbal supplements affect retention of a factual radio programme. SR/PUB, 1973.

RYDIN, I. Information processes in pre-school children II: facts and irrelevant details in a TV programme for children. SR/PUB, 1976.

v FEILITZEN, C. Children and television in the socialisation process: some results of Scandinavian research. SR/PUB, 1975.

FILIPSON, L. Sesame Street in Sweden. SR/PUB, 1973.

DAHLLÖF, U. Reforming higher education and external studies in Sweden and Australia. Uppsala: Uppsala University, 1977.